ISMAIL GHAZI

MAN vs BOOKS



OMAR PUBLICATIONS

205-D. Rehmanpura Colony
LAHORE-12 (W. PAKISTAN)

MAN

Vs

BOOKS

BOOKS AND WHAT THEY STAND FOR !!!

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A Librarian's Musings

A study in Brief of The Problems of
Libraries and The Library Staff in
Under-Developed Countries and
A Side-Light on The New
Trends in The Political
Sphere of Indo-Pak
Sub-Continent.

MAN

VS

BOOKS

MIND'S HERITAGE OF THE PAST:
IMPORTANCE IN LIFE AND LITERATURE:
AN EXHAUSTIVE ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS
ASPECTS:

By

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To

those restless and
inquisitive souls who are ever
and avidly on the lookout for any
word of wisdom from any quarter
and who zealously appreciate the self-
sacrificing spirit of the true servants
and well-wishers of humanity at
large this humble venture is
gratefully dedicated.



Muhammad Ismail Ghazi

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VICE-CHANCELLOR UNIVERSITY OF THE PUNJAB

SENATE HALL, LAHORE
22 July, 1966

I am glad to learn that Mr. Muhammad Ismail Ghazi, with his known interest in books, book-reading and book-loving, is now devoting himself to an exposition of the great part that books play in the development of morals and manners.

I am sure that the work on which Mr. Ismail Ghazi is engaged at present will bring out the fact that books make an important contribution to our cultural tradition and thereby to the stability of human society.

PROF. HAMID AHMAD KHAN
VICE-CHANCELLOR

9th June, 1966

The author is a librarian, and a librarian in the true sense of the word. His life-long association with books and libraries has enabled him to drink deep at the fountain of learning. He is a lover of books and a keen admirer of what they contain and what they stand for. He has studied the ins and outs of his profession thoroughly, and has not been contented with that, but has a sincere urge to make people realise the real worth of books. His previous work '*A Librarian's Musings*' bears testimony to that fact.

Like his previous book, the present one also deals with books, authors, libraries and the wisdom they contain, and also passingly throws light on many important events which have influenced the course of life in general.

I have not been able to go through the whole of this book, but whatever I have been able to read convinces me that the information stored therein will certainly be useful to the readers, and stray suggestions of a very constructive nature contained therein will definitely prove useful for readers, thinkers, authors and general

public alike. During the course of his musings the author has referred more than once to the contribution made by the Muslims in the field of learning. This subject bears great importance for us in this country, because the knowledge of the glorious past will certainly rouse an urge for having a glorious future, which undoubtedly is achievable through honest, sincere and selfless labour.

I congratulate the author on his venture and wish him success.

PROF. ALA-UD-DIN SIDDIQUI
Head of the Department of Islamic Studies
University of the Punjab, Lahore

and

Chairman, Advisory Council of
Islamic Ideology, Pakistan.

July 19, 1966.

Mr. Muhammad Ismail Ghazi is a dedicated person and has spent a life time in the service of "books and readers".

His projected publication provides interesting reading. It is a very worthwhile manuscript and could conceivably prove of great value when published.

PROF. NAMDAR KHAN

ADVISER, GENERAL EDUCATION
and
EX-OFFICIO JOINT SECRETARY
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
LAHORE

May, 24, 1966

I have glanced through the script of '*Man Versus Books*, and am pleased to find that its learned author, Muhammad Ismail Ghazi, a veteran book-lover himself, has justified the treatment of the subject. The book is a successful attempt at stimulating readers' thought and is the right stuff for publishing in a developing country.

Dr. ABDUR RAUF

DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES,
GOVT. OF WEST PAKISTAN, LAHORE

7th July, 1966

It has come to me as a very pleasant surprise that Mr. Muhammad Ismail Ghazi, an expert in Library Science, is writing a comprehensive book covering the vast field of the place of books in society, their appreciation, the full range of knowledge in general, and the contribution to it of eminent Muslims in particular. I have used the word "surprise" advisedly, for those who are well versed in Library Science usually get so lost in the cataloguing and issuing of books in a library, that they fall victim to rigid office routine, and do not have time, or even inclination, for research and original work. I congratulate Mr. Ghazi on breaking the schackles of routine and launching out into "fresh fields and pastures new". I wish him every success.

HAMID ALI KHAN
Vice-President and Managing Director,
FRANKLIN BOOK PROGRAMS, INC.

۲۴ جون ۱۹۶۶ء

محمد اسمعیل غازی صاحب کی تصنیف کا مسودہ دیکھکر غالب کا یہ شعر یاد آگیا :۔

ذکر اس پری وش کا اور پھر بیاں اپنا
بن گیا رقیب آخر تھا جو رازداں اپنا

جسطرح "اس پری وش" کے بیاں نے غالب کے راز داں کو اپنا رقیب بنا لیا تھا اسی طرح غازی صاحب کی زبانی کتابوں اور مصنفوں کا بیان سن کر ان کے کئی طالب علم ملا قاتی ان پر رشک کئے بغیر نہ رہ سکیں گے ۔

اپنے عمر بھر کے تجربے کے بعد غازی صاحب نے اپنی اس کتاب میں کتابوں اور مصنفوں اور لائبریریوں پر بڑے وثوق سے گفتگو کی ھے اور کتابوں سے ان کے بہت گہرے تعلق کا خیال کر کے ان کے قاری پورے اعتماد سے ان کی آرأ کو مستند سمجھیں گے ۔ پاکستان کے موجودہ دور میں ان کی کتاب عظیم مصنفین کی تصانیف سے عموماً اور نامور مسلم مصنفین کی تصانیف سے خصوصاً متعارف کرنے اور پاکستانیوں نے اپنے زندہ جاوید پیشروؤں سے جو ورثہ پایا ھےاسکی عظمت کو سمجھنے اور اس کی بدولت اپنے مستقبل کو درخشاں بنانے میں قابل قدر خدمت سر انجام دے گی ۔

سید امیاز علی تاج

DIRECTOR
BOARD FOR AVANCEMENT OF LITERATURE
LAHORE

FOREWORD

Mr. Muhammad Ismail Ghazi has approached me with the request to write a foreword to his new venture entitled '*MAN VERSUS BOOKS*', which I am pleased to accept.

The book is highly readable as it traces the background of book-writing vis-a-vis man, history and science. The author has exquisitely compared the world of books to a noble edifice such as the *Taj* which, however, was only a piece of architecture built of stone, brick and mortar. The most painful thing is that our noblest heritage in the form of books lies neglected. Iqbal mourns the same thing when he declares :—

1 تجھے آبا سے اپنے کوئی نسبت هو نہیں سکتی
کہ تو گفتار، وہ کردار، تو ثابت، وہ سیارا

2 گنوا دی ہم نے جو اسلاف سے میراث پائی تھی
ثریا سے زمیں پر آسماں نے ہم کو دے مارا

3 حکومت کا تو کیا رونا کہ وہ اک عارضی شے تھی
نہیں دنیا کے آئین مسلم سے کوئی چارا

4 مگر وہ علم کے موتی، کتابیں اپنے آبا کی
جو دیکھیں انکو یورپ میں تو دل هوتا ھے سیپارا

5 ”غنی روز سیاه پیر کنعان را تماشا کن
که نور دیده اش روشن کند چشم زلیخا را“

(*Bang-i-Dara*: *pp. 198-99*)

1. There is virtually no comparison between us and our noble ancestors. They believed in solid worth and work whereas we indulge only in idle prattle and empty words. They had a vitalistic approach to life and had a vibrant faith and taste. We, on the other hand, are mere dummies, static and soulless in character, devoid of the dynamic qualities of our forefathers.

2. Shorn of our ancient ancestral culture, we today stand bereft of the glorious heritage of our predecessors and have been plunged headlong from empyrean heights down into the abysmal depths of ignominy and shame.

3. The loss of temporal power, however, is of no consequence as it was just a transient gift of history. There is, in truth, no escape from the set laws and canons of Nature.

4. But our very hearts bleed for those priceless gems of thought and knowledge, which lie enshrined in the form of heavy gilt-edged tomes inscribed by the masterly pens of our great ancestors, and which today decorate the museums of Europe.

5. "Just imagine the dark fate of the Old Man of Cana'an (Prophet Jacob) whose darling child Joseph (who is the very light of his eyes) brightens the sight of Zuleikha, a foreign beanty."

Mr. Ghazi has spotlighted some very important points which would attract every reader's eye such as :

(a) Books and the Part they Play ;

(b) The Obscene and Unhealthy Literature ;

(c) The Habit of Book-Reading ;

(d) The Role of the Writers and the Place they Occupy in Society ; and

(e) Libraries and the Role they Play in Promoting the Cause of Books.

Books are the true measure of a nation's greatness and there is no exception to the said rule. The books written on Islam and - under the banner of Islam - clearly point to those celestial heights scaled by Muslim thinkers, scientists, artists, militarists, jurists and physicians, etc. Books were regarded not only as a mount of knowledge but also a fount of knowledge to irrigate the intellectually and educationally barren and desert tracts of East and West during the Middle Ages.

As Bertrand Russel has rightly pointed out East and West have been dominating each other turn by turn during the course of centuries. First the Greeks rose to power followed by the Great Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was replaced by the Muslim Caliphate which touched its zenith of glory. The Chinese Empire, too, shone gloriously in arts and sciences in war and peace. Europe was then shrouded in total darkness. The West once more emerged out of its centuries-old-darkness, and with the growth of Imperialism and Colonialism East was subjugated slowly and steadily. But after the two World Wars China and Russia have awakened after a long spell of drowsiness, lethargy and oppression. They have now come out as 'big powers' and the countries of Europe are overawed by their growing influence and marvellous achievements.

Now again, Asia is rising - Phoenix-like from its ashes - and so is Africa, and Europe is once more going downhill. It is time for us to rearrange our national and cultural heritage and put our house in order. The Pakistan Movement received a great fillip from our writers and poets like Sir Saiyyed, Akbar and Iqbal, etc. To

preserve our freedom we need the mighty bastion of knowledge, past as well as present, in the shape of books. Even technical knowledge must lie within the fold of books. This is a truth which must find a mirror in every heart and to which every bosom must return an echo.

I am pleased to find that this book is the outcome of the work which Mr. Ghazi has undertaken and the labour he has put into it. This is his second venture. The first book was published a couple of years ago under the title of "*A LIBRARIAN'S MUSINGS*" which has already won praise and acclaim. The book is extremely absorbing with scintillating passages profusely scattered about over its pages. Mr. Ghazi seems to have turned all his pent up energy and enthusiasm to the composition of '*MAN Versus BOOKS*'. I wish the author the joy of his venture and strongly recommend the book to those who believe in worth and appreciate the labours of an author in the manner it deserves.

MUHAMMAD YASIN WATTOO,

Minister for Basic Democracies,
Social Welfare & Local Government,
West Pakistan, Lahore.

Lahore, 16th August, 1966.

PREFACE

Every book has its own background. We live and move in a world of cause and effect. Whatever we do, has a cause which gives it birth. This article is no exception to the said rule. In fact, it was originally written in reply to an invitation from the Honorary Secretary, Pakistan Library Association, Dacca, for the sake of the Annual Librarians' Conference held in March, 1965, at Lahore.

Many aspects were to be dealt with, as a result of which the paper grew in size. It was, however, not possible to finish the treatise within the specified time. A part of it could, therefore, only be read at the Librarians' forum. Afterwards, the demand for its early publication in complete form was persistent. So in deference to the public wish I produce the said manuscript in its present form, for what it is worth.

The book is just a small "store" of the writer's personal views and observations

based on his professional experience of a life-time librarian. A separate work under the title of "*A LIBRARIAN'S MUSINGS*" has already made its appearnce in the market.

Thanks to the process of evolution in every sphere of human activity, there has been a steady march of science and philosophy ever since man began to think. New ideas are born and borne across the world. Chance or accident, too, has played no small part in the advancement of knowledge and progress of thought. Many a scientist made his discovery by a sheer stroke of luck, by a mere chance. Of course, later on others took up the thread and by effort and industry tried to explore the given ideas and improved upon the initial theories. So our entire scientific progress is based upon a curious inter-play of accident and human effort.

Similarly this meagre but original piece of work, may open other author's eyes to certain points and problems and thus lead the way to some constructive thinking and solid contribution on their parts. Once a beginning is made,

there is every possibility of something useful and valuable turning up in due course. Indeed it is only a closed mouth that catches no flies.

Hence this is a book for all - the layman as well as the professional student. There is no specific bias, no technical taint, to mar its frank appeal to the general reader. Given due encouragement the author may well be expected to continue his humble efforts in this direction in the positive belief that :

The greatest good may spring from the smallest thing.

M. ISMAIL GHAZI,
Librarians' Mansion
Lhr., May, 1967 *Rehmanpura Colony, Lahore.*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A philosopher has rightly said that "all that mankind has done, thought, gained, or been, —it is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books". From time immemorial the man has realized the dynamic force that books hide in their bosoms. If we probe through world history we find that though books from the outside seem to be soulless and dumb entities, they have proved to be the only safe repository of fruits of human experience and learning through the ages which record, preserve and transmit to us the vast treasures of wisdom gained by mankind in the course of time. These experiences attained by effort and endeavour in varied forms—good as well as bad—were duly transcribed in the chronicles of the day by the sharp-edged pens of historians.

The magnificent edifice on which our present culture rests and whose glamour enamours and even stupefies us owes its existence, to a great extent, to the unstinted service of those great

writers who oblivious of their personal interests dedicated their unbiased pens to record the activities and achievements of their times. A European has truly interpreted the idea by saying that, 'books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind, to be delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those that are yet unborn.'

This is the permanent feature and almost an obligation for one generation to place on record the outcome of the events of their time for the future guidance of those who get into their steps. It is gratifying to note that present culture in spite of its consummation and the high place it has attained, still has the rigid principles laid down by Ibne Khaldun, an Arabic historian of some 650 years ago and which are still considered so forceful that the historians take them as the yard-stick for measuring the veracity of the past historical events. So on this score we cannot question the integrity or the personal proclivities—that may have crept into—the recording of the past achievements by the writers, which has come to us in the shape of books. These scribbles are the

precious legacies and we rightfully adorn our shelves and take inspiration from them in re-orientating our policies. They are now to us as sacred assets, because a politician entrusted with heavy duties of running the administration of states and governments, a scientist who dips into the boundless sea of experiments in his laboratory, an economist planning schemes to put his country on the path of prosperity, in the light of experiences handed down to them, take guidance and beware of adopting those follies which were earlier committed by their fore-runners. And Whipple only unveiled a truth when he said, "Books are light houses erected in the great sea of time".

This is a historical fact that before the advent of Islam the whole world was plunged in "Cimmerian darkness". It was not confined to the uncivilized Arab nomads who indulged in extreme vices, but also extended to the peoples of the known world who were sailing in the same boat. The Roman and the Byzantine civilizations, which were then at the zenith of their glory were stricken down with dissentions and torn by personal strifes. If that were not the case, and we counted

only on the vices of the Arab world, the justification of the universality of the 'Islamic Message' would not be fully appreciated. The plain fact is that the whole world stood in need of a Reformer, who could reclaim them and inculcate true moral values and save them from destruction attendant upon vice.

So came the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and the Holy Book—Al Quran—was revealed to him by stages. This magnificent Word of God begins with the following verse :—

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ۝ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝

"This is indeed the Book, there is nothing to question it. It is a guidance for those who are pure and shun evil." The word ذٰلِكَ is a prepositional word and has been used here to throw emphasis on the word الْكِتٰبُ i.e. *the Book*. Hence the very first word used in the Holy Scripture is "Book". By this very fact we can realize the importance given to the "book idea" by God Himself through the Holy Prophet of Islam.

SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE BEFORE THE ADVENT OF ISLAM

The first revelation came to the Holy Prophet to prove the Scripture as a clarion call for humanity runs as follows :

اِقْرَاْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَ	Read in the name of thy Lord Who createth.
خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ	Createth man out of a mere clot.
اِقْرَاْ وَرَبُّكَ الْاَكْرَمُ	Read ! And it is thy Lord Who is Most Bountiful.
الَّذِىْ عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ	Who teacheth by the pen.
عَلَّمَ الْاِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ	Teacheth man that he knew not.

This is the epigrammatic writing and it contains three momentous prophecies. I shall, however, refer only to the one which has a direct bearing on my subject, God says to the Prophet :

اَلَّذِىْ عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (God) Who teacheth by the Pen. It not only proves that God is the highest of all and every one else is subordinate to Him, but also establishes that God teaches knowledge by the Pen. In other words it was a pointer that from

then onward the practice of writing would become popular and assume a new phase in the history of man. After this declaration the diffusion and dissemination of knowledge among the Muslims assumed abnormal proportions with such rapidity that the city of Mecca which had only seven literate persons at the time of Muhammad's Prophethood (Peace be upon him) and where magnates and big lords considered it insulting to learn three 'R's. Even poets memorized their poetry by heart ; and, if someone suggested to them to put their verses in black and white, it was sufficient to enrage them. They rather considered it an honour that people remembered their long poetical compositions by heart. But after the Divine revelation, an astonishing change took place. Now no really illiterate persons could be spotted among the Companions of the Prophet. Everyone of them got educated.

Where there is an avidity for learning and knowledge and increase in the written material, the springing up of fresh ideas and opening up of new vistas of knowledge, is an indispensable corollary. Thus it happened that the people's

attention was diverted to various branches of knowledge and science. The Muslims were enjoined upon by the Holy Prophet to search for knowledge from cradle to the grave. It was essential because the addressees of the Holy Scripture were required to be learned persons and not illiterate. This is because divine revelation is complete in all respects and is declaredly an accomplished code of life bestowed upon mankind, not for some given or specific period—as the other scriptures had outlived their utility by that time—but for all time to come.

A VIVID COMPARISON

Shah Jahan—the Moghal king of India erected the tomb of his beloved consort Mumtaz Mahal, after her death, at Agra. This was the consummation of love a husband can show to a wife. This splendid building was built with the untiring zeal and industry of thousands of labourers, who helped in realizing the cherished dream of Shah Jahan by the sweat of their brows. The architects and the planners sat to chalk out such a blueprint as would immortalize the construction in history. So the whole of India pooled down its resources in men and material and

contributed in various shapes to achieve the king's dream. This was really a triumph of love which overwhelmed the lover-king. Many died in the course of fulfilling the great dream.

Today when people come to see this splendid mausoleum, they forget the toils of those thousands who laboured hard to complete it in about two decades and made it worthy of veneration as one of the wonders of the Ancient as well as Modern World. People come and are enmeshed by its exquisite beauty. And some of the loveliest women long to be entombed in such a palatial tomb, after death. Once an American lady Charles Bade by name, on visiting it expressed herself thus to her husband "If you assure me to build for me a similar tomb as *Taj*, I would like to die even now."

People have expressed such views for the building which is a composition of brick and mortar, lime and stone, which has no eternity, no durability, notwithstanding how much care is afforded by the Government for its upkeep and preservation, although no instructive, educative or moral values are attached to it. Cracks

have begun to appear in it. It is the condition of such an elegant monumental edifice erected by an emperor and the responsibility for whose preservation lies with a powerful State.

There have been such conquerers as made the mighty people bow to their toes, when came under their sway. Wherever they marched the kings and potentates accepted their lordship and became their tributaries. But today one cannot tell as to where they were buried after death. The only information we get about their great deeds and their magnificent victories is through books. Had not this means been available, there would have been none left to tell anything about them. As such mankind would have become the victim of historical oblivion at the hands of their own progeny.

A few months ago we read the news that an Egyptian had been trying for the past many years to unearth the mystery narrated about the burial place of Alexander the Great, one of the greatest conquerers of the world, who was stated to have been buried around Alexandria, a city founded by him in 330 B.C. This man is reported to

have spent a huge fortune in this venture but has not been able to locate the exact place as yet.

By narrating the above example it is intended to show that people attach much significance to the immortal things made of mud and mortar, which offer only momentary pleasure to the mind and body and have no ethical values attached to them. How greatly it devolves upon us to view the things in their right perspective.

Books have the inherent potentiality and capability of changing the entire direction of events, and have the immense power to make bigger things than the *Taj*.

Engrossed in these ideas, I wonder why we should catch the shadow and leave out the substance. Why should we depend on superficial things and not imbibe the true spirit with which the genius of Shah Jahan and the builders of that great tomb were fed. Surely the 'Reseachers and the Historians' have conflicting views about the real name of the architect who planned out the sketch of that marvellous tomb, since they had been buried beneath tons of earth. And perhaps it might not be possible now to unravel the mys-

tery which shrouds these names. But their genius shall ever strike every comer, who happens to find chance to visit Agra and an ungrudging and spontaneous homage will spring up in his mind and gush out for the master, planners and the architects. Thus it would save them from getting into the dust of oblivion.

When these ideas were hemming me in, I thought, that it was not possible for everyone to find chance to go over these historical monuments erected by the genius of man, on earth. At the time we were the citizens of undivided India some twenty years ago, in spite of our great ambition to pay a visit to *Taj* and other historical places of note, built by our past kings, many hurdles came in our way and we could not realize a dream we cherished so lovingly. Now we are further alienated from that country and are the citizens of a foreign land for her. God knows if we are able to fulfil it or not? I was obsessed with these ideas, when the thought flashed across my mind, as to why I should not tell my readers that the sole aim in visiting the ancient relics and the religious and historical shrines,

which are reminiscent of our past is to get some instruction, lesson and inspiration to enliven the great tradition, stored in our dead past. But how would be it possible for hundreds of thousands among us who have neither means nor privileges to realize them. When I was absorbed in untying these knots, another idea flashed into my mind which suggested that 'Why should not I tell my readers and those who are sailing in the same boat that they already got this *Taj* and score of others similar to that erected in their own places'. But the only tragedy was that in spite of having these nearer to them they pass off daily unnoticed before them.

While these *Tajs* are of such movable character that should anyone wish to invite them to his own dwelling, cot or palace they have the capacity to reach unto them with open arms. Now they need not suffer the toil and turmoil of travel and incurring of heavy expenditure. They are not to undergo various formalities which a foreigner is required to fulfil before proceeding to a foreign country.

These symbols of antiquity are disguised, nay, garbed in the form of books. They are *Tajs*

in miniature and stored in the libraries. These rare monuments are symbols of our golden past running into the present and flowing on to the great ocean of the future knowledge. And these are anxious to go out into the hands of each and every person irrespective of caste, colour or creed or the bar of wealth and poverty. These have now changed with the times. And the practice that had been in vogue for about centuries back that only a few privileged ones could afford to read them, and the common people had no access to them has since undergone a complete change. Now the radical changes have occurred, and every field of knowledge has been revolutionized. In the same way the "book idea" or a ' library Science" has developed too.

RELAXATION OF RULES CONCERNING THE ISSUE OF BOOKS

With a view to make the people book-minded even the genuine book losses are overlooked now. If the people have not the capacity to purchase the costly editions, the market is flooded with cheap reprints. These are published to popularize the books on a larger scale. If the people can ill-afford to spare time and to go to the libra-

ries, they can get them issued for reading at home. If they have the space problem, they can get the microfilm copies. They have the facility to consult the costly, rare and reference books in the libraries and **escape** the hardship of purchasing them out of their own pockets.

And if with all these facilities at one's disposal, a man remains unbenefited and in face of the fact that a rivulet flows close by his residence and one keeps on groaning and complaining that one is thirsty, and when all opportunities are present to satiate one's hunger and one does not exert to cut one's bread and carry the loaf to one's mouth, the fault is one's and one's alone and not that of the custodians of books or the books themselves. The librarians and the libraries are eagerly waiting for the readers to come and tap their resources and drain the shelves. This is essential to maintain, to augment and to save their knowledge from lapsing into illiteracy. Even those unfortunate persons who had not opportunities to learn three 'R's in the school-going age, can even now learn them there under the able guidance of the librarians.

The magnificent and exalted place was thus given to the books by God through the Holy Prophet, on the eve of his auspicious advent—the perfect man sent to guide the mankind for all time and for all ages to come.

After this brief introduction and signifying the important role the books play and the place they occupy in the civilized world, the salient points now required to be discussed are :

1. Books and the Part they Play ;
2. The Obscene and Unhealthy Literature ;
3. The Habit of Book-Reading ;
4. Role of the Writers and the Place they Occupy in Society ; and
5. Libraries and the Role They Play in Promoting the Cause of Books.

Now these problems will be dealt with point by point :—

CHAPTER II

BOOKS AND THE PART THEY PLAY

AS has been mentioned at the outset the books possess the dynamic force. These have the immense power to change the fate of nations. What brought about the "French Revolution" and led to the emancipation of the doomed French people from the clutches of oppression and suppression by their despot rulers. This was solely due to the fiery outpourings of the French writers, who fired and enflamed their nation and brought about the Revolution through the medium of books and rhetorics. Changes far too numerous have occurred since then History has witnessed cases when despot kings and the autocrat rulers imposed restrictions on the publication of books. But Islam remained averse to this attitude. It, on the other hand, accorded it such respect and honour and so highly raised the place of the printed page that whenever and wherever a Muslim finds a piece of written

matter lying on a road-side or in the streets he picks it up with reverence and puts it in some hole in a wall lest the sacred name of God, if so written should be desecrated.

CRITERION FOR ASSESSMENT OF BOOKS AND THEIR VALUE

It has always been a controversial subject as to which are the best or great books produced by the genius of man. The literary critics, authors, editors, educators, publishers and librarians—who have a direct touch with books—have been preparing such lists, as have exerted continued impact on human thought and action. The range of their influence was not confined to a single nation, but it crossed the international barriers and a major portion of the world was affected. The ambit of these illuminating books spread over the whole range of knowledge. Complete agreement was neither possible with the past listers nor with those who would embark upon this venture in future. These selections have always been personal and subjective.

Some of the best books which won fame and greatly influenced people of their time, were

eclipsed when the problems they offered were solved. Though they continued to decorate the pages of history due to the role they played at some specific time but their real value was outlived and dwindled down ever afterwards.

Contrary to that there were some such books as passed these acid tests and time factor did not affect them—rather it enhanced their value more and more by adding to their fame crest by crest. Although these were not the direct revelations of God—or born out of the Prophets own minds or the saints, yet when we read them, they have such a forceful appeal as shows that they were produced by men who were incarnations of the wisdom of God on earth. The prophetic touch given to diverse problems which the mankind had to face not in their own time but centuries afterwards, points to the genius working behind these scribbles who tackled them by wearing the spectacles of the future, made predictions and foretold like soothsayers, by living in the past and telling of the future. Veritably these are now to us the souvenirs of those great intellectuals. These have established

the fact that man indeed is a true representative of God on earth They found eternity and their producers have been immortalised. Libraries adorn shelves with them and achieve a grandeur all their own.

In 1945, an English writer, Horace Shipp, in his little volume, '*Books that Moved the World*' listed ten such books which had influenced the world. This selection covered all fields of knowledge and also without any restrictions as to time, or place. They are :

1. *The Quran.*
2. *The Bible.*
3. Plato, *the Republic.*
4. St. Augustine, *The City of God.*
5. Dante, *The Divine Comedy.*
6. *Shakespeare, Plays.*
7. Bunyan, *the Pilgrim's Progress.*
8. Milton, *Areopagetica.*
9. Darwin, *The Origin of Species.*
10. Marx, *Das Kapital.*

An American Librarian, Robert B. Downs, in 1956, published a categorised list of sixteen titles under the cover '*Books That Changed the World*' along with an enlightened and scholarly introduction. He has, however, restricted his selection to these fields; history, economics, culture, civilization, and scientific thought, from roughly, the Renaissance down to the mid-twentieth century. These are :

The World of Man.

1. Anatomy of Power Politics
   Niccole Machiavelli : *The Prince.*

2. American Firebrand.
   Thomas Paine : *Common Sense.*

3. Patron Saint of Free Enterprise
   Adam Smith : *Wealth of Nations.*

4. Too Many Mouths :
   Thomas Malthus : *Essay on the Principle of Population.*

5. Individual Versus State, Henry David Thoreau : "*Civil Disobedience.*"

6. Crusader For the Lowly Harriet Beecher Stowe : *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

7. Prophet of the Proletariat Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*.
8. Leviathan Against Elephant, Alfred T. Mahan : *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*.
9. Heartland and World Island, Sir Halford J. Mackender : "*The Geographical Pivot of History*.
10. Study in Megal-o-mania : Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*.
11. The World of Science, Celestial Revolution, Nicolaus Copernicus: *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*.
12. Dawn of Scientific Medicine, William Harvey : *De Motu Cordis*.
13. System of the World, Sir Isaac Newton: *Principia Mathematica*.
14. Survival of the Fittest, Charles Darwin: *Origin of Species*.
15. Psychologist of the Unconcious, Sigmund Freud : *The interpretation of Dreams*.
16. Godfather of the Atomic Age, Albert Einstein : *Relativity, The Special and General Theories*.

THE INFLUENCE OF TIME-FACTOR ON THE IDEOLOGY OF BOOK-MAKING

Mr. Downs has discussed some important points in his introduction to the above book. Did the times make the book, or vice versa i.e., was particular book influential chiefly because the period was ripe for it ? Would the book have been equally significant in another era, or could it even have been written at any other date ? He sums up the discussion by saying "It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the times produced the book in nearly every instance. In some other historical epoch, the work would either not have been produced at all, or if it appeared would have attracted little attention.

As regards the tape for measuring the extent of influence a book gets Mr. Downs asserts, 'A well-nigh infallible index to the extent of influence is the strength of contemporary sentiment, pro and con. If a book stirs up violent opposition and equally partisan feeling in support of its point of view, the probabilities are that it has deeply affected the thinking of people. Official censorship and efforts at suppression also are indication of its reception. Insight into these attitudes is

provided by such sources as contemporary newspapers, controversial pamphlet literature, accounts of historians and biographical studies.

THE DEFINITION OF A BOOK

He has also discussed the point about the definition of a book ; 'Should it be judged on size alone ? He regards this yardstick as preposterous. He cites some titles in this connection, as for example '*Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity*' and Thoreau's '*Civil Disobedience*'—the latter book influenced Mr. Gandhi and he started civil disobedience in India after taking inspiration from it—which are no more than pamphlets. These two in fact, first appeared as periodical articles. He quotes Voltaire's saying 'that the big books are never the ones to set a nation 'on fire, "it is always the little books, packed with emotions, aflame with passion, that do the business". So, the size is virtually without significance. It would also be interesting to note that the prolific writers who produced some three to five hundred books came into the limelight due to one or two of their works which eternalised the author and attracted the masses. All others either went out of

man's mind or memory or plunged into lethean waters. Shakespeare's plays are however, an exception to this. His dramatic creations are the exquisite pieces of aphorisms, which are scattered profusely through these pages.

CHAPTER III

THE OBSCENE AND UNHEALTHY LITERATURE

ANOTHER important point to be discussed is the obscene literature, or such written matter which tends to provoke lower passions and casts an adverse affect upon the budding youth and impair their character. Undoubtedly this problem has assumed such large dimensions as should provide food for serious thought, to the writers, and authors, who hold the welfare of the nation and the country dear to their hearts. As the function of a sharp edged knife is to cut when it is employed by a surgeon in operating upon a patient, who stands in immediate need of it and any delay might cost his life, it would be its correct use. If, however, it is used for waylaying people and then cutting their throats, it will be a wrong and ignominious use. Similarly, books have wielded an immense power for

delivering both good and bad throughout the chequered history of the human race. Bacon once said, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested."

Such literature which stirs passions and develops morbid mentality is just like a poison which degenerates the national character and retards its progress. A writer's pen is like a sharp edged knife of a surgeon. As he employs it while operating upon a patient and sometimes amputates the diseased organ, to save his life, a writer does the same way, when he sharply criticises and pointedly spots down the evils that creep into the society. By doing so the sole purpose that remains ever before him is reclamation and remedying it. This is the healthy and progressive view, so we should not put unnecessary curbs upon a writer, which tend to retard the creative power and kill the originality of ideas that opens up new avenues of free thought.

LITERATURE OF "NONSENSE" AND OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS IT.

The other point is that the thoughtless literature does not need much attention. It dies

down itself when it does not evoke much interest and encouraging response in people. After all thousands of books have been written by now. But how many of them have influenced people and won fame ? A few ones and only those which left the lasting impression on humanity and moved the world at large. Milton paid homage to such monumental pieces of literature by saying :—

> "A book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life".

It has been said by a writer that 'the books sing, they hurt, they destroy, they build, they teach, they sanctify.'

The greatness of literature lies in observing and recording what is good and noble in the world. Written things, pieces of art and films are reflection of the society we live in. A person who produces the obscene literature is, therefore, a corrupt person ; he sees only the evil side of life. Indirectly he perpetuates evil through his poisonous productions.

THE WRITER'S MISSION.

A good writer or artist has a very delicate duty to perform. By virtue of the place he occupies and the social responsibility devolving upon him, he has to sift the good from the bad by a winnowing process and to present only the good to human beings.

The patriotic people snap their fingers and clamour over the morbid and unwholesome creations in literature. One thing which we totally overlook is that we throw all burden on the writers and do not see the trends of our readers who like and encourage such trash material. It is a proverbial saying that 'necessity is the mother of invention.' This sort of literature s profusely produced because our either sex eagerly studies it. It is my personal experience as a librarian ever since my entry into this profession that 95% of the readers demand fictional literature, love stories or detective novels. Books on Science or other fields which can help in augmenting knowledge, are seldom requisitioned. This is not the case with the average reader but

of those who have already qualified and specialized in fields, I have referred above.

So, it is an imperative call of the day that the people who shape our educational policy should adopt measures to arrest the sale and distribution of obscene literature. They should make arrangement simultaneously to educate and mould public opinion to desist from studying obscene and unhealthy literature, as otherwise, we will become a tool in a way by encouraging the spread of such obnoxious literature.

HOW DO BOOKS IMPRESS MAN'S MIND AND INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION.

The more you read the less perhaps are you influenced by books in a definite manner. This is the psychology of the book-reader. As it is, good books have an indelible imprint on the mind of a reader. And sometime a single title changes the destiny of a man and impresses him to the core. I quote here an instance which would show how a single book left a lasting impression upon Mr. Gandhi—the great leader thrown up by the fertile soil of India. Mr. Gandhi never claimed to be a well-read man and how

remarkable was his life transformed by a single title, '*Ruskin's Unto The Last*', which fell into his hands on a railway journey in South Africa. It made a profound impression on his mind.

The second example I would like to quote and which would show the immeasurable power that a writer's pen commands is of Firdausi, the great epic poet of Persia. He was employed by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna—who carried out many successful invasions of India, to versify the entire history of the ancient kings of the Empire and that he would be paid one gold coin for one verse. When this ill-fated and unlucky poet completed his work, after undergoing hard labour of about 35 years he was given, instead of the fixed remuneration of one gold coin for each verse, only one silver coin per verse, which he refused to accept. He left Ghazna with a broken heart and as an utterly dejected man. He wrote after that his famous satire composed of a few verses, which brought infamy to Mahmud for ever. Every effort of the King to stop its currency remained infructuous and could not wash out its ill effects left for ever on the pages of history. I may cite three verses hereunder :

ایا ! شاہ محمود کشور کشا ، زکس گرنہ ترسی بترس ازخدا

اگر شاہ را شاہ بودے پدر ، بسر بر نہادے مرا تاج زر

اگر مادر شاہ بانو بدے ، مرا سیم و زر تا بزانو بدے

1. Oh ! King Mahmud, the conqueror of kingdoms and realms,

   If thou fear not anyone, at least fear God.

2. For had this King aught of nobility
   High throned in honour should I seated be.

3. Had his mother been a real queen of royal lineage,

   I would have been showered upon with gold and silver upto my very knees.

In short, as regards the role of the books it can safely be said that great thoughts, noble ideas brave all barriers of time and space through books. Books have facilitated the transmission of experience. Books are the great treasures of man ever produced which gave eternity to the knowledge and immortalized the phenomena of genius through them. As the progeny of man forgets

its ancestry so rapidly that had not this tool of preservation existed, their names would have been sacrificed on the altar of forgetfulness. A thinker has aptly remarked that books are the posthumous children of their authors.

CHAPTER IV

THE HABIT OF BOOK READING

THE zest for book reading has always been the habit of a man. These days when life has so heavily been occupied by multifarious activities, still there are people who believe that books are the best companions and permanent friends of man, they pursue study and enliven their souls just as they enjoy their daily meal. The study has assumed so high a place in the civilized society that Coleridge once wrote, "Unfortunate is the person who does not know how to read in a cold wintry Sunday afternoon."

There have been glorious periods in the history of Muslims when they acted as the torch-bearers in the cultural and scientific adventure of man. These pursuits require calm, serene and congenial environments. Patronage by the nobles and Heads of States is also a factor which counted much in this respect. And these were

abundantly available in the past. Muslim history is replete with such instances when even the illiterate kings stuck to these traditions and gathered around them the men of letters and gave them the patronage they deserved. Akbar the Great—one of the Grand Moghuls of medieval India was himself illiterate, but his nine courtiers, renowned in history as "Nau Rattan" (nine gems) who won much fame due to the perfection they achieved, shone like stars and occupied a permanent niche in the hall of fame. The kings and the nobles had not only acted as mere patrons, but they themselves were keen pursuers of knowledge and had contributed much by producing monumental works and furthered the cause of book promotion.

There have passed many writers in the Muslim period who produced luminous books which wonderstruck the world centuries after their death. Here are quoted a few of them.

AVICENNA—A VERSATILE GENIUS

Abu Ali Sina whom the Westerner called Avicenna—a versatile genius, endowed with penetrating intellect, was the writer of about one

hundred books. He passed through many vicissitudes of life and fortune, but in whatever state he lived he did not put his pen down and continued writing whether he was in gaol, at home or in a desert.

Two of his most outstanding and illuminating books entitled '*Qanoon*' قانون and '*Shifa*' شفاء touched the extremes of fame. The first one is an encyclopaedia of therapeutics. He has divided this book in five grades. The skeleton that he laid about one thousand years ago was so sound so exhaustive in detail that its utility stands out as unequalled till present. These books were included in the medical courses of Europe and were being taught for eight centuries in all the medical colleges there. In spite of the astonishing developments in medical science in Europe the base in therapeutics there is the same which Avicenna set in his book and this is a great tribute to a Muslim Scientist.

IBNE ARABI—A GOD-INSPIRED AUTHOR

Ibne Arabi was also a prolific writer. He wrote about three hundred books. His two books

entitled الفتوحات مكيّه (*Futuhat-ul-Mkhiyat*) (*Meccan Revelations*) and فصوص الحكم (*Fusus-ul-Hikam* (*Bezels of Philosophy*) won much popularity. The special feature which strikes one in these luminous writing is that they were God-inspired and were not wholly based on the scholastic knowledge.

Geologists claim today that they have made definite discoveries about the creation of the earth. But Ibne Arabi over eight hundred years ago mentioned in his book '*Alfatuhat-i-Makia*' Volume I Chapter VII that it was revealed to him in a trance that the earth was created in many millions of years ; and that man was created seventeen thousand years after the creation of the earth. His original words run as :—

هُوَ آخِرُ جِنْسٍ مَوْجُودٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِ الْكَبِيرِ وَآخِرُ صِنْفٍ مِنَ الْمُوَلَّدَاتِ

that the man is the last perfect phase of the trinity of created life in its graduated forms of geology, botany and zoology and determines the space of time involved something like seventy one thousand years.

IMAM GHAZALI, A GREAT MORALIST AND MYSTIC WRITER

The third writer worth quoting is Imam Ghazali. He was the author of about seventy books. He was a great philosopher and his books were highly thought provoking and instructive inculcating an exhaustive code on teaching of moral values. A Book entitled إحياء العلوم الدين (*Revival of the Religious Sciences*) is one of the master works ever produced on 'Ethics', was the outcome of the Imam's ten years extensive travels and experience. The Imam was a leading figure of the mystic school of thought. '*Reaival of the Religious Sciences*' is an authority on topics dealing with ethical values. A European orientalist has said, "If all the other books on ethics are lost, still with the help of this one book, the moral values of life can be realized and revived." A hard-boiled theologian has drawn a parallel between this book and the '*Holy Quran*' which is a revealed Scripture. The seekers after knowledge and right-minded people have always received this book with profound reverence and

felt greatly benefited The book has been translated nearly in all the widely known and important languages of the world.

KNOWLEDGE A FOUNTAIN HEAD OF LIGHT AND TRUTH

Knowledge is like a bottomless fountain of Light and Truth and a seeker after knowledge can never satiate his thirst fully. The more he drinks the more he wants. As a diver plunges into the sea and sometimes brings pearls of one colour and on the second dive of another and at the third attempt something quite different from the previous ones, in the same way there is no static point in the sea of knowledge. A person tackling it by various angles can lend it variegated colours and satisfies himself. This is the call of knowledge—a clarion call indeed—to benefit thyself.

A time comes when persons who cultivate the reading habit, find both books and diet equally indispensable for them. A European, Mr. Bartholin, has picturised it and given a vivid

description of the same point in the following words.

> "Without Books God is silent. justice dormant, natural science at a stand, philosophy lame, letters dumb and all things involved in Cimmerian darkness."

Our golden past which can be compared to the Europe of the 'Renaissance Period', is replete with such glaring instances when both the rulers and the ruled, no less than nobility established public as well as personal libraries. Their passion and proclivities for reading reached such a high pitch that hardly any day passed when they broke off this practice.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF MUSLIM DEVOTION TO STUDY OF LITERATURE

Ibne Rushd (Averroes) whom the European called the incarnation of the wisdom of God was so much engrossed in study that according to Ibne Aba "In whole of his life only two such nights passed in which he could not continue it and those were when he wedded and when his father died."

It is an established fact that the Muslims were prone to learning from their very start.

Ibne Huqal narrates an interesting story. He describes that once he was passing through a street when he saw two porters carrying the lugggage and going along the same way. Their necks were badly burdened under the weight. But the most remarkable point he describes was that both of them unmindful of the trouble were mutually discussing the *Traditions* and the commentaries on the *Holy Quran*. Ibne Huqal followed them a good distance listening to their lively discussion. Their condition exactly symbolised.

دست با کار دل با یار

'While at work their mind was not forgetful of the Creator.' They were doing work because it was ordained by God and became part of their worship.

Al-Hakam the II, a renowned Caliph of Spain was a great bibliophile. He had four hundred thousand books in his private library. He was endowed with a keenly studious bent of mind. He made marginal notes on all the books while at work. On reaching the evening of his

life his eye-sight was adversely affected due to excessive study. But he satisfied his zest by listening to other persons' recitations. This exhaustive treatment is essential for determining the bent of the reader's mind and for reviving the spirit of study and revitalizing them for the future.

POLITICAL DOWNFALL AND LITERARY DEBACLE

Today when we see that our past glory has gone out and the materialistic advances made by the Western World are so great, so magnificent that apparently Islamic society cannot withstand the flux of times. The Islamic World which suffered a heavy set-back after the great holocaust of 1258 A. D., when the last tottering Abbasid Caliph, al-Motasam, was martyred by Halaku Khan, and the regimentation of the Muslim world was torn to shreds. There was never any occasion in history came after the great calamity when the Muslims, as a whole stood united under one flag, on one platform ever afterwards. With the exit of our sovereignty our creative faculty

also suffered immeasurably. After this ordeal the scientific works produed by our authors were of a repetitive nature and were mostly redundant, a rehash of commentaries or gists of what had been written earlier.

Although the Caliphate, of course, in name only was revived by the Fatamide kings of Egypt through a fleeing descendant of the Abbasid dynasty of Baghdad, yet they were mere puppets in their hands. The appointment and dismissal of these Caliphs entirely rested with the kings and they wholly fed on the bounties lavished upon them. This too came to an end when the Ottoman Sultan Salim overthrew the Fatamides and conquered Egypt.

The Ottoman Sultans though added another religious insignia to their mundane prestige, but they invariably gave preference to their Sultanship over religious leadership, for they got the latter with force. They never liked to be addressed as Caliphs. Their choicest title was the Sultan (the King). And this too came to a stop when in 1922, this symol was politically abolished by Ata Turk.

This is a sad story and beyond the scope of the present dissertation. Only such clues have been given as are necessary to coordinate and link up my point of view with the previous background.

We lost many empires one after the other simply because we abandoned the tenets of faith and flouted injunctions of the Great Prophet of Islam. The main purpose of the religion is to make a person civilized to enable him to have fair dealings with the society he moves in and to fulfil the obligations devolving upon him with regard to his fellow creatures as well as the Creator. The ultimate goal is to win the pleasure of God.

It was a clear injunction by the Holy Prophet (duly corroborated by the *Holy Book*) to show respect and to grant privileges to the foreign emissaries for they represent their country and its Crown. Chengis Khan had an ambition to enter into trade relations with the conterminous Muslim King, Ala-ud-Din Muhammad Khwarzam Shah. So he despatched some merchants to the adjacent Muslim Province. But they were

massacred by the unscrupulous Governor of this Province. Upon this Chengis Khan sent his envoy asking King Khwarzam Shah to hand over the defaultering Governor to him. But as ill-luck would have it, this emissary met the same fate at the monarch's hands. Now the Tartar fury and flame fell upon the Muslims like a bolt from the blue. The sword once drawn was sheathed only when the total structure of the Muslim solidarity had been torn into tatters by Halaku Khan, his grandson. By perusing this brief background of historical facts which culminated in the breakdown of the muslim Power in entirety, we come to the logical conclusion that these calamities were not fallen as a matter of chance, but were the inevitable corollary of the circumstances under which the then Muslim world was labouring in those days.

Now many Muslim countries have won freedom and salvaged themselves from foreign bondage. The one obvious reason was the awareness of the masses of these regions. The other factor was the world-wide wave of freedom that was sweeping from coast to coast. It is not

easy now for any foreign power to keep lasting hold upon any people and there is no place for colonialism in the present-day world. We should not be complacent about our country's political emancipation.

*While advanced countries spend nearly two per cent of their gross National Product on scientific research, as for example in Pakistan the proportion is as low as 0.14 per cent. At this rate it would never be possible to catch up with the advanced States. The fact is that the research expenditure in the United States approximates twelve billion dollars per year. The trend is rising. The same is the case in the United Kingdom, Russia and other scientifically advanced countries. It, therefore goes without saying that the development of research should be given top priority.

THE SECRET OF OUR SUCCESS

The real independence shall be complete

**Science for Survival* by I. H. Usmani pp. 25

only when we are economically freed from hunger and want. That would emanate from our own resources and by our taking keen interest in the field of Science and Technology. That would come from our laboratories and our vitality of experimentation there ; that would come from our rich repositories, spreading over various fields of knowledge named and known as libraries ; that would come from our research pursuits and our unstinted efforts to unfold the hidden treasures of knowledge lying dormant in the *Holy Quran* ; that would come from our belief in one God not in name only but in the true spirit ; and that would come only after we inculcate in ourselves the habit of study, thus saving our time instead of wasting it in useless pursuits and frittering away our energies.

The only difference between ours and the Western society is that they fully rely on the materialistic resources. But we are given a free hand by our religion to learn all the current sciences. We are told by the Great Prophet of Islam that "The word of wisdom is the lost pro-

perty of the believer and if he finds it anywhere he has the right to pick it up."

After all why are we not taking a keen interest in cultivating the habit of book reading and why are we not giving such treatment to these books as they deserve. The only apparent reason seems to be that we think them to be soulless entities and unpurposeful. Some can argue that a substantial number of our people belonging to intelligentsia is aware of the hidden force latent in the books. But it is a fact that the bulk of our population does not take interest in the reading material. There is an alarming rate of illiteracy in our country. The point can be substantiated by observing facts and figures as detailed below.

Statistically speaking, out of the total world population about half belongs to Asia, while of the illiterate world three fourths is located in the same continent.

The percentage of adult illiteracy obtaining in some countries of both Under-Developed as

well as Developed runs as under :

*1.	Burma.	42.9%
2.	Ceylon.	42.0%
3.	India.	82.1%
4.	Pakistan.	86.8%
5.	Iran.	High

The table shows the magnitude of the problem and the attention it needs to combat it. The main requisite is to pool down all incentives and resources to make our people book-minded, changing our system of instruction, educating our children, and the budding generation in such a way that before they leave the academic institutions, the students should have developed such a passion for reading as may last throughout their lives. This is the only way to save our posterity from ruination.

HOLLOW-LOVE ELEMENT IN MODERN STUDY !

By making hollow pronouncements that we have got love of books does not matter at all and would not serve any fruitful purpose unless tangible results are produced. Libraries which are the 'wardrobes of literature' encourage research and scholarship and help in educating the adult

**Statistical Yearbook, United Nations, 1961.*

and the child in a continuous process, enter intimately into the life of the community, develop the mind and body, do not attract such number of readers which should have come according to their relative importance. Many librarians hailing from various parts of this country hold the view that the public has all along evinced little interest in tapping the resourees of the libraries located in their towns and cities.

EMPTY WORDS BREAK NO BONES

Mere presence of a thing does not mean that the owner is really deriving such benefits as would accrue from it, if it were properly harnessed. The possession alone does make nothing. For instance the Arab countries and Persia are considered the major units in possession of oil reserves in the world. But the biggest buyers of these oils are the European countries. The owners only feed on the royalties, which they get in lieu of their possession. The outsiders draw rich dividends by utilizing these oil reserves in various ways. Thus the foreign countries have changed the destiny of their peoples and put themselves on the road to progress and

prosperity. The royalty received by Arab and Persian kings and potentates is spent on luxuries and for self-aggrandisement or swelling their bank balances. It is interesting to note that whatever they receive, goes back by making purchases of the luxurious goods.

Our own country Pakistan is the biggest producer of raw jute, but it is exported as we have not got a sizable number of mechanical plants by employing which we might manufacture useful articles and earn heavy foreign exchange than what we are earning at present. Before the Britishers usurped our freedom, the undivided India was said to be the 'golden sparrow' for it was rich in mineral and agriculture resources, self-sufficient with bumper harvests and rich in food production. With the passage of time it grew in population with alarming proportions. But in view of the huge resources available in the shape of vast tracts of lands, mountains and water, it was easy to tide over any crisis that could come in the way.

Moreover, population grew everywhere. Many countries were less-gifted than ours. The

fact that whereas we remained jammed, and stuck to the old traditions the European peoples kept themselves abreast with the march of time. We the people of Afro-Asian countries, remained reactionary to every new move. Our sterotyped educational system in Indo-Pak sub-continent which was purposely designed for us by our erstwhile overlords to produce 'baboos' considerably harmed us and retarded our progress in every sphere of life.

In the near past our women were wearing seers of weighty gold ornaments in the shape of ear-rings, bracelets and other jewellery to give an ostentatious air. But conversely this precious metal was put to use by the Western world, in many useful ways and they reaped rich dividends on this score. This was the proper use.

Islam introduced 'Zakat System' (The Wealth Tax) with a view to systematize the accummulation and circulation of wealth and to put it on a sound footing and to save it from jamming. It spurred the Muslim Community to invest it in industrial and commercial enterprises. It is a fact that as long as the Muslims acted upon

these injunctions they were prosperous people and the society they created was a model one. We could not spot the sign of penury and want anywhere in a countries that remained under Muslim domination. The rich people of Baghdad who were required to part with 1/40th of their accummulated wealth as other Muslims do, when taking this amount in hand searched for the have-nots in the streets and thoroughfares for distribution, they had to turn back disappointed, because no one from the town could come forward to receive that bounty.

THE IDEAL STATE UNDER THE MUSLIM SWAY

The prosperity was rife, and everyone was spiritually, morally and economically satisfied. That was the ideal state, a utopian world created by Islam. It is a queer coincidence in the annals of Islamic world of the goneby days that the military adventures and the promotion of arts and learning run simultaneously and neither suffered at the cost of the other. That ideal state and the model society did not last only a few years, but spread over centuries from its

growth till gradual slackness crept in which resulted in total stagnation and degeneration.

Our countries are rich in mineral resources. But whereas we make with iron only knives and scissors or at the most small agricultural tools, the western people manufacture magnificent machinery. And by harnessing this scientific machinery they produce nearly ten times quantity from the same acreage whereas we are still bound to the old tillage system. The result is that our growing population could not keep pace with our agricultural output and if we go on like this the time is not very far off when we shall be permanently dependent on foreign aids and become a parasitical nation.

EUROPEAN NATIONS AND THE ROOT CAUSE OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

This is not a difficult question to be tackled. The European people attained these marvellous achievements after pooling together their resources and energy for the past six hundred years. Their present achievements one at the heel of other in the fields of science and technology, education and

culture stemmed from the unstinted and concerted efforts of their experimenters and researchers, done in the vast laboratories, or in the libraries. Now we hear every now and then that either Russia or any other European country is taking a leap forward over the other, making discoveries and inventions in the field of science and technology and we people are just witnessing these achievements like a silent spectator. These successes are the outcome of their constant labours rendered in the service of mankind in the shape of their various beneficial inventions. They try and fail but continue till they are crowned with success and now their journey from the remote Stone Age and Cave Age to the Atomic Age in fact is a journey of Knowledge.

WHEN WEST WAS GROPING IN THE DARK

The peak glory of success to which the Europeans have reached now was the place held by the Muslims in the hey-day of their glory when these nations themselves were groping in the darkness of ignorance and illiteracy. In this connection an interesting example would show the real state

where the western world was standing when the glorious sun was shining on the Muslims and they were the flag-bearers in every known field of knowledge. Because all parts of the ancient Greek territory were under the Byzantine empire, therefore all the books of the Hellenic Sciences lay with them. Mamun-ar-Rashid who had the keen desire to transmit this knowledge to the Islamic World by rendering them into Arabic, once wrote to the Roman Emperor asking him to send those books to Baghdad. So the Emperor ordered for accumulation of all books and volumes. But to his dismay no such books were available. He got angry, summoned his courtiers and said that the king of the Muslims had made a very modest request but that too could not be acceded to. The real thing was that all such books from the libraries, falling under their territory were burnt, at the directives of their clergymen. If, however, there was any lying with the individuals, they hesitated to put forward before the Royal functionaries, because their possession was an unlawful act. At last an old clergyman pointed to a certain cathedral where a stock of such books had been

dumped from ancient times. When they opened it, it was found to be replete with thousands of invaluable books. So the useful books were then separated.

Before sending them to the Abbasids Caliph, however, the Emperor, again sought the advice of the pontiff, for their despatch might not constitute a sin. The pontiff readily replied that despatch of such books to their foes with such obnoxious matter contained in them which was liable to be consigned to the fire would rather be a pious act. On arrival, the Caliph assigned these to the translators working in his famous 'Bait-ul-Hikmat' (The House of Wisdom) who translated them into Arabic. This is a great favour on the part of the Muslims to the Western world. By rendering these valuable treasures into Arabic they preserved for ever the Hellenistic knowledge for all mankind.

THE FALL OF GLORY THAT WAS BAGHDAD

As has already been mentioned that the Muslim world was unfortunate to become an easy and accessible target of Chengez and

Halaku Khan's tyranny and persecution. The western countries were however, lucky so much so that they were out of their reach. The remainder of the Muslims who survived these holocausts felt so much frustrated that they ceased to relish life and civilization. This current of disappointment swept across the entire Islamic world and after that such literature was produced as was a reflection of submission, resignation, conveying the sorrow over the passing of the glorious heritage, the vanity of the world, taking shelter in side issues and narrating episodes of chivalric romance. Now they made searches for the easy topics for diversion's sake in order to console themselves of the great wound they had received at the hands of merciless Tartars. They were utterly a forlorn people. *The most regrettable part was, however, that they lost all the eagerness aud avidity in the field of Science and this was indeed, a dark day in the annals of Muslim history.*

EUROPE STEALS A MARCH!

When Ibne Rushed was goaled for his excessive predilections in philosophy, his jewish pupils

and patrons had to migrate from Spain to other parts of Europe, they took with them his literary and scholastic productions. The European peoples, too, had acquainted and identified themselves with the works of the Muslim scientists of Spain and Egypt a few centuries before and the European scholars had begun studying the literature produced by Muslims in various fields of Science. By this study they were able to shed the prejudiced views held by them under the influence of their clergymen. *The net result produced was that the Muslims who had been giving lead in the field of Science for the past seven centuries, had to step down and their place was taken by the Western World. Thus the fourteenth century was the end of the Muslim lead and from that time onward the Western era started which flows into the present.*

THE 1258 A.D. HOLOCAUST AND ITS AFTERMATH

It is a sad story that Islam, which enjoins the search for knowledge from the cradle to the tomb became an instrument of reaction to all progress in the hands of the fanatic Ulemas and religious Jurists. Not only did the Muslims begin to take

the decision of the early jurists as complete truths but by false analogy they also began to look upon their scientific achievements as the last word. Some enlightened people of Turkey clamoured against this mediaevalism but they were 'voices crying in the wilderness'. In Turkey the successor of the Cáliphate (The Religious Leadership) which was responsible to give lead to the Muslim world,had scholars who even were unaware of progress made in Science and Industry during the 17th and 18th centuries and remained mediaeval.

In quoting these examples at length the treatise does not digress into a platitudinous discourse or dogmatic discussion. The sole aim of education is to produce good citizens. The teaching of the Holy Prophet aimed at changing man in all entirety. It had so stupendous an effect on the Arab nomads and they were so much absorbed themselves that whenever they prayed they prayed not for His gifts, but only to please Him. By giving detailed instances it is intended to substantiate the fact that we suffered due to our own morbid mentality and locking ourselves against every new idea by negative processes and methods. We gave to every

change the name of innovation and shut our eyes to the naked consequences that were likely to accrue in future ; otherwise the teaching we had been given was so exhaustive and the complete guide bestowed on us in the garb of *the Holy Quran* was so perfect that the possibility of our degeneration was out of question. The Holy Prophet successfully acted on those principles and proved their utility to the core. After the era of prophethood which lasted only for 23 years and was veritably a string of 23 pearls—the era of his Companions began and that too stretched over a short period of thirty years.

THE EARLY CALIPHATE—A TRUE MILLENNIUM

All of the four Caliphs successfully worked on those principles and created a society in their times that was a model one. Even the non-Muslims are envious of that society and the way the Caliphs steered the bark of their Governments. Mr. Gandhi, once exhorted his administrators to run their Government on lines similar to those of Hazrat Omar, the Second Caliph of Islam. This era ended shortly and abruptly due to the morbid ment-

ality of our people. That golden era might have been prolonged further, had our people sincerely wished so. It was a God-given era and a condescension from Him. When we refused to have it, it was withdrawn and kingship was imposed on us in the garb of Ommayyads, Abbasids and Ottomans Caliphs. There is, however, a minor exception to it when Hazrat Omar-bin-Abdul Aziz, an Ommayyad Caliph ruled the Muslim world, but it did not last more than two and a half years. The rays of those auspicious times were so forceful, so penetrating that they left permanent effects on the mind and body politic of the Muslims.

Despite the personal strifes between the various ruling dynasties and sometime adventurous and turbulent life, the urge to further the cause of knowledge ever remained latent and alive in them. They always served for the cause of promotion of books and knowledge, but now, that is a thing of the past. Our prosperity, our future is linked with our golden past and the enlivening of that very spirit is our proud legacy. Otherwise, we will become poorer and poorer day by day. It would be advisable to dispel the complacency that

any Government would be able to give us economic freedom or provide any opportunities for better life with the help of industrialization. We have to import the entire machinery and in some cases even raw material from outside. On the basis of these grim realities it would have a slight effect upon our economy.

The menace of growing population is an impending problem, a terrible spectre hovering over our heads. The little profit that accrues is voraciously consumed by this ogre.

THE ONLY PANACEA

The only tangible formula, the only panacea for the ailment is to enrich our laboratories, to divert our attention towards science and technology, to flood our libraries with useful books, to revive the spirit of research and scholarship, and to base our knowledge on religious lines and to re-establish our past glory and raise ourselves to the same pedestal. The '*Holy Quran*' is a complete code of life and a mine of religious wisdom and wordly science. By teaching us سِيرُوا فِى الأَرْضِ (Go

out and visit the world) it rivets our attention on history and geography. It also enjoins upon us not to squander our fortune and in this way it draws our attention to planned economy. And this cannot be achieved without learning mathematics and then it teaches us وَيَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ فِيْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ And they ponder over what has been created in the Heavens and on the Earth.

The Muslim is invited to focus his attention on terrestrial and celestial bodies. He is asked to watch the natural phenomena and to try to understand them. And this cannot be accomplished without learning Astronomy. Then it invites our attention to the study of Psychology and logic by saying :—

Do ye not understand (This aim) ?	اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ
But what hath come to these people that they failed to understand a single fact (4.78)	فَمَالِ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُوْنَ يَفْقَهُوْنَ حَدِيْثًا ۝

As for example it tells us that the idolaters say that they will do whatever their forefathers had been doing. Allah says that if their forefathers were foolish even then they will adhere to what they had been doing. This is a logical approach that if they had suffered and ruined by thelr follies, would others follow suit and meet the same fate.

We were told that the good thing was a lost property of a Muslim and wherever he found it he should pick it up. Contrarily the European nations acted upon it and they built the magnificient edifice by working on the experienees of their Muslim predecessors. God has made both Religious law and also the Law of Nature. The Law of Nature is His Deed and Religious law His Word. Looking at His Word and leaving His Deed is a work of an unprincipled man.

God has made both din (Faith) and has created the earth as well. The only difference is that one is His Word and the other His Deed and both are inter-linked and corroborate each other. Just as it is incumbent upon us to offer

prayer and to keep fast, in the same way learning of current sciences is a 'must' for a true believer.

In short, the Holy Scripture laid full emphasis on the learning of current sciences along with religious knowledge. Thus the need of the day for freeing of our minds from the obsession of the dogmatic beliefs has been substantiated.

CHAPTER V

THE ROLE OF WRITERS AND THE PLACE THEY OCCUPY IN SOCIETY

THE PEN IS STRONGER THAN THE SWORD

There is a saying of the Holy Prophet (May peace be upon him) that the ink of a learned man is equal to the blood of a martyr. As the martyr sacrifices his life in the cause of some cherished goal, in the same way a writer wages a crusade with his pen against the evils he detects in the society he lives in. He is always outspoken and blunt in pointing out those evils caring nothing for the wrath and fury of the individual or the public at large. He would rather incur the distaste of society as a whole in the cause of Truth. If he remains unbiased and impartial while sitting in judgement at the time of arriving at decisions involving his people, it would instil force and vigour into his writings and these scribbles would be taken by people to their hearts and

tangible results would soon begin to appear. It would be a precise analysis of that state of affairs when we say that the writings of such authors have surpassed the efficacy of machine gun shots in achieving ends and results.

MATURITY IN WRITING

The men of worldly power have always recognized this latent force behind the quill of the great scribes and they ever remained apprehensive about them. Some scholars have fixed the period of 44 to 54 as the stage when maturity and effectiveness find their appearance in the writings of great authors. It is perhaps due to this fact that after forty a man reaches his full culmination and becomes liable for a mature mind. During the early years of his life he passes through varied phases which provide him vast opportunities to gain sufficient experience and they serve as guide in his later life and guard him against future dangers and pitfalls. Thus the public is benefited by the vast experiences which abound in his works.

When for a while we dip into our past history we find that the enormous intellectual adventures

of Muslim scholars recognized no barriers of time and space, race or language ; their passion for reading was matched only by their passion for writing. And the history of world bears ample testimony to the fact that their energy flowed into and fertilized every conceivable human activity.

WRITING AS A CAREER

Writing is neither an easy nor a profitable career these days. A writer has to undergo many hardships in treading upon this path which is strewn with thorns. He passes through various stages just like a labouring woman who is in the throes of birth pangs at the time of bringing forth a new life into existence. He confronts myriad of ideas that float in his mind and he has to choose very meticulously his material out of them and to fill in colours in its contours. Before writing on a subject the mental cultivation and processing and linking up the various unconnected chains into a well knit whole is a delicate job to perform. With these ideas he builds an edifice after toilsome watching by the midnight lamp and the 'racking of the brain'. Samuel Johnson has

depicted the toiling of a writer in the following brief and trenchant remark :

> "A man will turn over half a library to make one book."

It also devolves upon the reader to try to derive due benefit from books and in this way we would be recognizing the labours of the writers. Through books we get knowledge so we should also handle them carefully and not treat them as we handle eatable commodities or think of them as futile entities.

DISADVANTAGES OF WRITING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

It is not necessary that one should prefer a foreign language for expressing himself, leaving his own national language. He can be more at home when explaining his viewpoint in his own language. Sophistication and superficiality would certainly occur if he would put forth his ideas in a language other than his own. He would feel burdened and do all that at the cost of his stamina or extra energy which, otherwise, could be

more profitably employed by using his own language. Sommerset Maugham who visited India a few years back advised the Indian writers to write in their own languages instead of writing in a foreign language.

A GLARING INSTANCE— AMEER ALI SYED

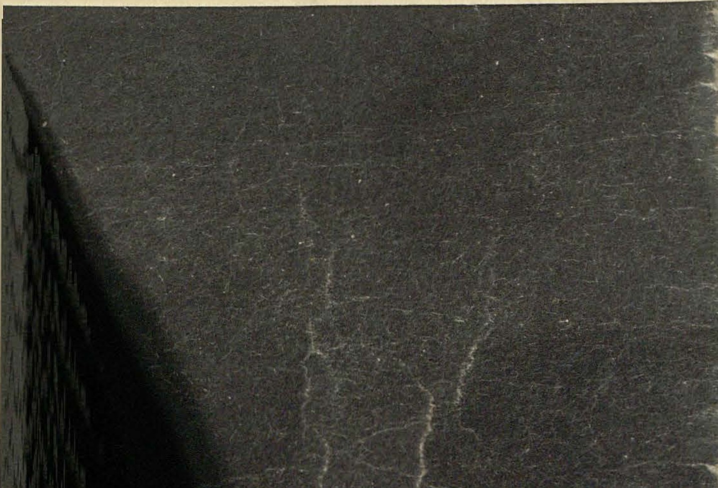
An awful tragedy which a writer would encounter and to which special reference is intended is that by writing in a foreign language a writer would only confine the number of his beneficiaries and the main aim of enlarging the frontiers of knowledge and broadcasting his ideas would miserably fail. His own-self would also suffer and the recognition which otherwise would have come to him would end. S. M Ikram, has given an example of it in his famous book entitled *Mauj-i-Kousar.* He has stated that Syed Amir Ali, a renowned jurist and celebrated writer who has written two remarkable books entitled, "*The Spirit of lalam*" and the '*History of the Saracens*" remained unknown to the masses. He did a yeoman service to Islam by writing these two illuminating books after thorough research and

by scanning the vast treasures of knowledge in the India Office Library, London. Islam was subjected to criticism by the European writers and many misgivings and misunderstandings had crept in the minds of those writers which he dispelled in a scholarly manner by putting forth cogent reasons and convincing interpretations, thus re-established the glory of Islam. His name would ever be remembered and reverenced in the Western World. But the lack of recognition he suffered was not due to any bias or conscious attempt on the part of his own countrymen but was a direct corollary of the circumstances which led to the fact that the language he had chosen was beyond the grasp of the people inhabiting his homeland. An American, who visited India at the end of 19th century and who happened to meet Syed Amir Ali, often said that by viewing the life of that man and after judging his character a judicious person could not help saying that the misunderstandings and misgivings born in the minds of European and American people were nothing more than unsubstantial allegations

which were both baseless and unfounded. Their truthfulness is shrouded in false colours. As such an impartial judge is bound to declare Islam as a true religion.

An English Orientalist is quoted to have said about the book '*The Spirit of Islam*' which was a book of the world fame' that "it was impossible to portray a more precise picture of Islam than that depicted by Syed Amir Ali and whatever possibly can be said in defence of Islam Mr. Ali has said in it. No son of Islam whether he belongs to Indo-Pak sub-continent or Egypt, Arabia, Turkey or any other Muslim country has so far written a book of such elegance, and really it is a remarkable enterprise and a phenomenon of great scholarly achievement." We the Muslims of this sub-continent have a right to feel proud of it. Dr. Smith has also profusely admired it and says that this book is frequently referred to in the modern Egypt.

But the only setback which this great writer suffered heavily was his expressing himself



in a language that was foreign and which alienated him from the masses; although the production of which in those peculiar circumstances was needed most. Islam was made the target of brazen attacks by all the nations of the world and especially European writers and a heap of such books was accumulated which were no more than blasphemy and baseless allegations against Islam and the founder of Islam. An able Muslim scholar was needed who should come forward and defend Islam by putting forth cogent arguments with sound reasonings and Syed Amir Ali did this Herculean job very ably and acquitted himself well of the heavy responsibility fell upon him as a Muslim writer.

NATIVE WRITING CROWNED WITH SUCCESS

On the other hand those writers who expressed themselves in their national languages left the lasting imprints on the minds of the masses and became immortal. A glance through the brief list of a few names in this connection would pinpoint my view :

Rabindra Nath Tagore, was a celebrated poet and famous novelist. Most of his creations are in Bengali—a regional language of India. But he became popular through those productions and by virtue of that he won the 'Nobel Prize' in literature. Similarly Sir Muhammad Iqbal, a great national poet of undivided India became famous through his poetry expressed through the medium of Urdu and Persian languages. The third writer is Munshi Prem Chand, a renowned novelist who wrote both in Urdu and Hindi languages. His short stories are exquisite pieces of Urdu literature. He had the marvellous descriptive power and surpassed all other writers in delineating rural life in a most beauteous and psychological way. Their instructive value excelled and it appears that what he says comes from the core of his heart and goes straight to the core of the reader's heart. His writings are ever and always appealing and attract the fancy of the reader so highly that one wishes to leave the book only when one has devoured it from cover to covor.

THE FOOLISH PHANTOMS !

Writers should not mind that by writing in native or national languages their fame or the utility of their works would be confined to their own country and would not cross the international barriers. Nay, as the beauteous things induce people to appreciate and adorn them, in the same way, such masterpieces will bypass and brave the limits and their fame would rather reach the extreme corners of the world. The people of the foreign lands shall get them through translations in their own languages and in this way would derive due benefit out of them. It has happened in the case of all the three writers mentioned above. Most of their productions were rendered into foreign languages. So, the fear of limiting the utility holds no weight. The catholicity of their ideas is sure to attain publicity provided they deserve it.

Now is left the question of encouragement to writers to enable them to devote themselves wholeheartedly with perfect peace of mind to the great work ahead of them. They need serene, peaceful

and congenial environment which is conducive to such works. Otherwise the homogeneity and the coherence will be lacking in their scribbles. They need liberal financial assistance to get their creations published.

THE WRITERES PEACOCK-THRONE

The strength, stability and glory of the Under-Developed and the Developing Countries rest on the renaissance of the spirit of inquiry and investigation. Let us as a people learn to honour and value the man who, in the solitude of his study strives to enlarge the frontiers of human knowledge. It is true that very often a writer's life may not have the comforts which many of his less gifted fellow-beings find. But let him not forget that future generations would remember him long, after others are forgotten and gone down to the abysmal dust of oblivion. We should not overlook this fact that no country could claim to make the best use of the creative talent of the people, unless every incentive is given to the writers to produce the best of books. This has to be a concerted effort on the part of the state sponsored

organizations, learned bodies and professional groups.

WRITER VERSUS PUBLISHER

Today in Asian countries, both Authors and Publishers are crying themselves hoarse, and recriminating eath other, to meet their self-motives and personal ends. Authors harbour a grouse against Publishers, for they devise tactics to underpay the former. On the other hand Publishers complain that the Authors do not put their head and heart into their creations, with the result, that they do not attract an appreciable number of readers, which normally should be the case.

To speak the truth unreservedly our people have not cultivated the reading habit, and have no craving for reading books by personal monetary purchase. They try to study every new volume either by borrowing it from the libraries or individuals. A popular work in this country does not attract even a part of the vast sale of a comparatively less known author in a Western country. Faced with misery and want the pros-

pective author is only too anxious to steer clear of the line. He adopts some other career.

Unless and until new openings are created for the budding authors and a better living status is made available, the fate of really intellectual authors in Afro-Asian countries is sealed. The gloomy future casts its shadow before.

THE BANKRUPTCY OF INTELLECTUAL WRITERS

This is a pertinent question that our scholars, authors, educators and librarians are not contributing anything worth the name which can bring their country at par or to the fore, in the comity of nations. The question is easy to answer. Because we have not set our schemes methodically and have no master-plan before us to implement it. We see often that the book-market is flooded with rich contributions and monumental works thrown up there by the foreign writers. Their Governments and their people provide them all possible facilities to enable them to devote themselves to work on some planned schemes. Every incentive is afforded so as to free them fully from the financial handicaps and worries of whatsoever

kind. They in turn, exclusively and whole-heartedly devote themselves to their duty and produce works of such marvellous nature which bring grandeur to their nation and lasting service to mankind. Humanity does honour them and history adorns their names with loving reverence.

THERE ARE WRITERS AND WRITERS

Of course, all authors, are not upto the standard. Man has become rather mechanical these days. Genuine intellectual effort is something rare. Books today are judged by their market value on commercial basis by great publishing houses. The writers try to cater to the reader's taste and follow the general public trend. This has resulted in the lack of moral fibre in modern writers and utter bankruptcy of ethical values. The creative gift is greatly damaged and mental faculties are badly sapped. The efficacy of the pen suffers and the imposition of artificial taste barriers has an unhealthy effect on the author and his products. The writer loses his personal mark or identity. Thus an element of falsehood or insincerity enters into his writings. He falters and stumbles where he should have halted and held

his ground. He panders to the readers' dictates of choice and taste and fails to guard against the forces of destruction inherent in the crucial times. Normally a genius should rise above his readers. He should broadcast his ideas from a higher pedestal. He should be immune from social and political corruption and proof against any materialistic allurements. He should seek inspiration from his inner conscience. Their wrong opinions or errors of judgement are overlooked as a human failing. Their greatness does not suffer on any account.

History records the greatness of certain kings and conquerors who achieved great honours but temporal greatness is short lived. The names of great poets and authors have become immortal for they held aloft the torch of Truth and Light and their contributions led to the emancipation of man's mind from slavery of ideas and customs. Their efforts were crowned with success and they proved to be the torch-bearers of humanity.

CHAPTER VI

LIBRARIES AND THE ROLE THEY PLAY IN PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF BOOKS

A detailed historical background has already been presented of the conditions prevailing throughout the world at the time of the advent of Islam. The medieval world was deeply plunged in utter darkness. Not to speak of books, man's mind was completely obsessed by unsubstantial fears and so to pacify his self-made norms, he prostrated before animate as well as inanimate objects taking them for gods and goddesses. However, the real God Who is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent had been thrown into the lurch. The Arabs, Chinese, Indians, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Buddhists had created their own gods to serve their purposes. Christendom which has today emerged as the most advanced civilization touched the extreme borders of ignorance and darkness in the gloomy past. In short, it was an

accummulation of credulous beliefs, superstitions and hallucinations.

In those utterly backward and turbulent times when the pall of gloom hung over the world, and the law of the jungle held its sway with "might being right" a single ray of hope dawned upon the earth and flooded the inner most recesses of contemporary cultures and peoples, shattering the barriers of caste, colour and creed. Man's mind had been locked against Light, Truth, Justice and Kindness. The dawn of Islam served as a beacon of light to the down-trodden and crushed humanity. A new cosmopolitan outlook was born and new horizons of sympathy and understanding stood open and broadened out at the magic touch of Islam. The medieval mind became a proper receptacle of divine message and human virtue.

Man began to excel in every sphere of thought and take long strides in making new discoveries and inventions. Thus knowledge expanded with miraculous rapidity. The change of outlook was not the monopoly of the Muslim World. Other alien nations and pagan cultures

also embraced and imbibed with the true spirit of research and discovery.

The sweeping tide of revolutionary thought spared no country, no clime. It did not draw any line between Muslims and Non-Muslims like the downpour of rain which does not differentiate between this land or that. This heralded the upsurge of spiritual and temporal knowledge extending across the borders of the then civilized world.

NETWORK OF LIBRARIES DURING THE MUSLIM DOMINATION

So the Muslims were favoured with glorious traditions as a legacy. They always held on these traditions and faithfully followed the injunctions of the Holy Prophet. They spread out a network of libraries in lands which came under their sway. John Daven Port in his volume entited '*Muhammad And Teachings of Quran*' describes how "The Holy Prophet founded a religion which led to the cultivation of arts and sciences, broadened men's minds and taught them toleration and fellow-feeling irrespective of colour and creed."

This in fact anticipated Carlyle when he said that "a true University af these days is a collection of books." It is now an admitted fact that libraries encourage research and scholarship, enter intimately and directly into the life of the community, develop the mind and body and help in educating the adult and the child in a regular and continuous process. The community is thus stirred and the need for more and more humanization of knowledge is accentuated with the result that books on all aspects of human knowledge are written in response to this stimulus.

TREASURE BOOKS AND OUR ANTIPATHY

People who have a ken of the honey in the books and the tremendous benefits attached to their association never let their leisures pass without tnem. They rather snatch out of their busiest and heavily engaged activities some moments and quench their passion for reading. There can be no excuse for idler, chess-players, street walkers or simple gossips who just fritter away their energies and waste their precious time without any seriousness of purpose.

ILL-PLANNING AND NATIONAL LOSS

Who can question the mellow fruitfulness of book-reading and general study? Under the present circumstances much of our man-power becomes rusted and generally wasted and results in national loss. This accounts for the barren, dreary, reckless and drab life which afflicts us. The responsibility falls on the shoulders of those who matter. It is for them to create understanding and realization among the masses by providing opportunities in the shape of attractive libraries where people could have the chance of availing themselves in a befitting manner.

Men of letters have always been desirous of getting more opportunities to pursue their studies. James I once remarked "If I were not a king, I would be a University man ; and if it were so that I must be a prisoner, if I might have my wish, I would desire to have no other prison than the library."

THE HEAVEN OF KNOWLEDGE

The library is a mirror where cultural experience of each generation lies recorded in print.

These records are available to a child, as well as an adult, a student, a research scholar and any seeker after knowledge. Library service to the community encourages the reading habit and stimulates hunger for knowledge which results in promoting book learning and its mass production.

THE STATUS, ROLE AND FUNCTION OF A LIBRARIAN

One important question now left to be discussed is the status and the role of a librarian and the opportunities provided to him for specialization in Under-Developed countries. This question has, however, been already dealt in detail in a previous publication by the same author entitled "A Librarian's Musings" and needs no exhaustive account here.

The status of the librarian given in Asia as compared with civilized countries has no parallel. It is not yet recognized in Afro-Asian countries as other professions have been recognized there. As far as the librarian is concerned, his is uudoubtedly an honourable and noble career. Those who have entered upon this career feel so badly let

down and fall a natural victim of social inferiority complex. Under such unfriendly circumstances it cannot attract men of calibre unless and until rich prospects are made available to such persons.

In fact the apathy of the public as well as the Government in the maintenance of both libraries and the library personnel is not easily understandable. Only a small number is engaged in this profession and if better conditions of service are introduced, miracles can happen. The talented people would be attracted to this line and by their qualified efforts the dead libraries can burst into life and thousands of books which are treasured there can find proper circulation instead of merely adorning the shelves of the libraries. The real point is to create the relationship between the reader and the books.

Another paramount question which has far-reaching effects on the library world and which merits serious attention concerns the functions of a librarian. What are the main duties and what role is expected of him. Ordinarily as an employee a librarian has only to look to the pro-

cessing of books. The processing, up-keep, maintenance and organizasional matters undoubtedly are the essentials of a well organized library which help the readers to fully utilize its resources. But adherence to these mechanical aspects alone would not do. There are certain other factors which are vitally to be considered before we could justifiably claim to have made these institutions capable of what they are really meant for. Treasuring up of invaluable books and lavishly spending heavy amounts on their up-keep would yield profitable results only when their hidden contents are thrown open to the public, and when the mysteries embeded in these dumb entities are unfolded.

These are the containers of Wisdom, and as far as their utility is concerned it is unquestionably indisputable. But the only thing they lack is that they are toungless, they have not the capacity to speak and tell their readers of the immense intrinsic value attached to them. There is, however, an exception to this standard—of those gifted men who always have a close eye on the book market and keep themselves fully abreast of the

library world. But the present discussion centred round the benefit of the common reader.

THE TRUE IMPORTANCE OF A LIBRARIAN

The right man who can unravel the mysteries that lie dormant in the books is the librarian himself, who is driectly responsible and dealing with them. But when he has no time to read for himself, these phenomena of man's genius—which he carefully gathers for his library—we cannot reasonably expect him to guide his readers since he himself is unaware of their contents. His case is similar to that of the man who sits by the side of a river with chained hands and remains himself ever thirsty.

As a corollary to these awful circumstances, he is not the only sufferer but his readers also pay dearly for the whole ill-planned affairs and policies that hold sway at present in our libraries. No satisfactory 'Referential or Advisory Service' is forthcoming from these institutions. Most of the fresh arrivals are dead, as the right person who can make these dumb entities vocal, himself has no reasonable time to dip into them.

THE INADEQUACY OF STAFF, A REAL PROBLEM

In the present set up all the time of a librarian is consumed in processing these books. These formalities can, however, be adequately performed by capable Assistants who are however, not provided. So, he has to fulfil all these formalities perforce. Inadequacy of staff is a big problem for the libraries in Asia. As such the Librarian is spared no time after passing through these drudgeries, to spend on the main obligation which he owes to his readers and to his nation at large.

This is the crux of the whole problem. If we really aim at good and beneficial results for which these libraries are intended, we should provide able assistants for every well-stocked library, thus leave the Librarian to disburden himself of such petty and unskilled jobs, which untrained helping hands can do in quite befitting a manner. Only the organizational and administrative matters should be left to him to enable him to dip deeply into the perennial fountain-head of knowledge gushing out underneath his library and coming out in the shape of small channels of books

adorned on the shelves. Thus in a way providing incentive for him to subscribe and contribute to the fields of study and scholarship.

If the Librarians who are poorly paid and the libraries which are inadequately staffed cannot yield the desired results, it is entirely due to the indifference shown to them. This rather defeats the very purpose of the establishment of these institutions. We should never forget that libraries play a dominant role in the life of a nation, in the social educational and intellectual spheres.

In this connection the following example would throw sufficient light on the miserable plight obtaining in our libraries and the working of the minds of persons at the top about the place and the status they give to the library and the library personnel as well.

Once an experienced librarian of an important academic institution in Lahore stated that the collections of his library swelled over twenty thousand volumes and that he was provided only with one Assistant to maintain the big library. Further, this solitary hand was an untrained and

could render but poor help in the discharge of work. Later, however, the Assistant said good-bye to his job as he was better fixed up elsewhere. After his exit the post kept lying vacant for a while and subsequently abolished on the ground that it was superfluous. The idea was that the Librarian was meant for handling the Library and he needed no clerical or manual assistance from any quarter and could deliver the goods single-handed. What was more, the subsequent retrenchment of the menial staff was applied to the library as well and the poor Librarian was relieved of his peon. This clearly demonstrates the indifference of the authorities that be, to the problem of libraries and library keeping. The Librarian had to remonstrate against this treatment.

In order to save the precious stock from book enemies like worms, moths and white-ants, constant cleanliness is a prerequisite and that cannot be effected without attendants. The havoc these enemy agents can play with books can well be imagined. The authorities realizaed the necessity of appointing a peon after much ado but the post

of an Assistant was, however, not filled up. The job of the proper adviser and consultant still lies vacant in any library in the Under-developed and Backward countries in Asiá.

There was an interesting incident in this connection. An eminent American Librarian happened to visit the Library. He was simply shocked and surprised on hearing that the strength of the library staff was limited to the Librarian himself. Ironically enough he paid a rich tribute to Asian skill to manage wholesale libraries single-handed. According to him the American libraries were rendering great social service by keeping open till late at night. This was effected by the librarians with the help of extra hands. So they discharge their duties efficiently. They are fully capable of serving their clientele as they are conversant with the worth and quantity of the volumes.

OUR INDIFFERENCE TOWARDS LIBRARIES AND ITS CAUSE

Here the question arises as to why we are severally or collectively so indifferent to libraries.

The answer is so disturbing. Firstly we have not yet fully realized the basic fact that our national growth and all material progress is directly or indirectly linked with dedication to knowledge of which the books are the store-houses. There can be no other way of tackling the library problem. The second cause may be economical—that is lack of financial assistance. But in any sound economic set-up the library issue must find a proper and respectable place. No issue deserves so much consideration as does the educational aspect of a modern library. In fact every issue must be dealt with separately and in its own right.

A SORE EXAMPLE OF FALSE ECONOMY

Who can forget the moral lesson of the King in a fable ? At a time when peace reigned supreme in the country and he was not involved in any conflict with the enemy, he thought it fit to disband his army and demobilize his soldiers as they constituted a heavy drain on the King's exchequer. When the enemy got wind of the situation, he marched against the King and completely routed. the band of butchers sent against his warriors

The butchers pitious appeal to the King to spare their lives opened the King's eyes. But it was too late and consequently he was deprived of his throne.

The same blind indifference is being shown to the library personnel in Afro-Asian countries these days. It is high time that a comprehensive and broad-based scheme be chalked out for the maintenance of libraries and the library staff to ensure a smooth flow of knowledge.

LIBRARIES IN UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND LACK OF PROPER TRAINING FACILITIES

There does not exist in the Under-Developed countries any well-planned library training such as in modern methods of training centres. One has to go abroad for specialization. It is clear that only a very few find a chance to go out as it entails heavy expenditure which our poor countries can ill-afford to provide. Unless we have such facilities in our own Asian countries we cannot find substantial number of workers adept in the library science who would come forward and organize the libraries on modern scientific

footings. So if we want the progress and prosperity of these countries we should, first of all, give due recognition to the library profession and make adequate arrangements for higher training in library science there With resources at our command we must reorganize this profession by providing better conditions of service in order to induce people to join it. We must not forget that at present insufficiency of funds and lack of imagination in planning out a library policy are problems which loom large on the the horizon. Here in Pakistan most of the people are without library service, 90% live in small villages or deep in the country side where books cannot or do not reach them.

A TIP TO THE LIBRARIANS

Librarians in our country also must not forget that books alone do not make a library. They have twofold duties to perform. They should keep up the high traditions attached to the profession by rendering satisfactory referential service and providing guidance to the readers. Their main purpose should be to inculcate in their

readers the habit of study. Simultaneously they should pool down their energies to strive for better status to the 'Librarian Community' by revitalizing their organizations.

It is not enough to supply books and other material in sufficient and accessible quantities. The basic training of the library staff and their mental adjustment with books and material to encourage public enlightenment is an indispensable corollary. It is of utmost importance in library work to discover exactly what the readers require. We must seek understanding of men and sympathise with individual needs and demands.

Changes far too numerous in various fields daily defy evaluations on the basis of out-dated knowledge. The theories propounded and the bases set in the past, if proved in the light of the present day researches as wrong, would be a victory for knowledge. It is more likely they may suffer a further change or altogether be

rebuilt. It does not mean the work done by the pioneers was wrongly based.

Suffice it to say that those efforts gave substantial help, or otherwise the present achievements would not have materialized. Their contribution was of immense value which helped the later experimenters to complete the edifice, the base of which had been raised by the foregoing people. But, if we remain biased and shut up our minds we will in a way seal our fate and retard our future advancement.

THE MARCH OF HUMAN MIND

Today age old geographical barriers such as seas and mountains, weather and climate, race and language and even time and space are fading into relative insignificance. While knowledge becomes cosmic, if feelings remain parochial, there will be a lack of harmony producing an utter imbalance, the effects of which cannot but be tragic. Great thoughts, noble ideas, travel across the frontiers of time and space through books. Books have made possible the transmission of experience. They are the great

treasures of man, his great achievement, his greatest glory. They were man's first immeasurable feat of magic. They liberated man from his barbarious past. For without these marvellous writings which built systems and sciences, man would have been confined to the self-isolated prison of the cave.

Man's journey from the Cave to the Outer Space is a journey of "Knowledge". This knowledge has to show man his inner-self and his path to salvation. Only books of great merit and excellence can give a nation intellectual and moral equipment which can create the type of manhood and social order that can accept the challenge of this Age.

If we go on counting the qualities or the intrinsic values of the books or the force they carried in themselves, or the changes they brought about in the destiny of man, nay, the destiny of nations at large, one can enumerate hundred and one examples and proofs inscribed on the pages of history.

If one dwells on them, even a voluminous book might not be able to incorporate all the outstanding qualities, but they will ever lag behind. The fact is that when a nation begins to love books, the other nations gauge its social, political, educational, scientific, moral and economic advancement with this tape. A Westerner once said that he could tell the development of a nation by witnessing its libraries. This is indeed an accurate yard-stick for measuring the development of a country. The German people made wonderful achievements because their libraries and laboratories remained open night and day. Even now in every advanced country the libraries and the laboratories render day and night service.

THE ONLY WAY

Would that time ever come when we would be able to realize the significance of these institutions which are the perennial fountain-head of knowledge and set them on lines followed by the advanced countries of the world. Would that

time ever come when the love of books is born in us and we are able to discern and decipher their real place and taste the honey which they hide in their bosoms; would that time ever come when we are able to leave the companionship of all the mundane objects which are only transitory in nature and sometime betray and leave us in the lurch and instead choose the company of books which is attended with permanent virtue and is blessed with variegated benefits. When this happens that day would indeed be a red-letter day in the history of the East and the Afro-Asian continent.

THE END

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Note :— The titles of books and the historical mausoleum *Taj* are given in italics.

ERRATA

Page	13	line	16	word	1	read	the
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N.B. The headings for Chapters Nos. V and VI have been erroneously printed. They may be changed to read "THE ROLE OF WRITERS AND THE PLACE THEY OCCUPY IN SOCIETY." (odd Pp. 67—79)

AND

"LIBRARIES AND THE ROLE THEY PLAY IN PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF BOOKS." (odd Pp. 83—95)

Omit the printed heading on even page 94 and read "MAN VS BOOKS."

THE AUTHOR

Born at Jammu Tawi (Kashmir State) December 1, 1919. Obtained his Bachellor's degree and the Certificate in Library Science from the Punjab University in 1951 and 1952, respectively. The Author is a veteran Librarian and has been in the profession for the last 15 years. He is an Executive Councillor of the Pakistan Library Association and has recently been re-elected to its Executive Body. He is Treasurer, West Pakistan Library Association, and is serving as an Hon. Lecturer, W.P.L.A. School of Librarianship since its inception. The Author has also worked as Consultant to the Committee constituted by the West Pakistan Education Department for the development of 'School and College Libraries'.

He flew to Dacca twice, as a delegate to take part in the deliberations of the 'Librarians Annual Forums' and read papers therein. His first book was published a couple of years ago under the title of "*A LIBRARIAN'S MUSINGS*" which has already won praise and acclaim. He has been contributing from time to time to various Newspapers and Journals of Pakistan. A part of the treatise was published in the Pakistan Times, under the heading 'Quran Among Books' in its issue of April 16, 1965.

He has been working as Librarian for the past many years in the Education department, Lahore. At present he is heading the Library of Government College, Lahore, the Premier and the biggest institutional Library of Pakistan. In recognition of his meritorious services he was given a prize of Rs. 500.00.

THE PUBLISHERS

GLEAMS AND GLIMPSES

The book is extremely absorbing with scintillating passages profusely scattered about over its pages. Mr. Ghazi seems to have turned all his pent up energy and enthusiasm to the composition of '*MAN vs BOOKS*'.

MUHAMMAD YASIN WATTOO

In his foreword to the book.

This book will bring out the fact that books make an important contribution to our cultural tradition and thereby to the stability of human society.

PROF. HAMID AHMAD KHAN

What ever I have been able to read convinces me that the information stored therein will certainly be useful to the readers, and stray suggestions of a very constructive nature contained therein will definitely prove useful for readers, thinkers, authors and general public alike.

PROF. ALA-UD-DIN SIDDIQI

His projected publication provides interesting reading and it is a very worthwile manuscript and could conceivably prove of great value when published.

PROF. NAMDAR KHAN

The learned author, has justified the treatment of the subject. The book is a successful attempt at stimulating readers' thought.

DR. ABDUR RAUF

Those who are well versed in Library Science usually fall victim to rigid office routine and do not have time for research and original work. I congratulate Mr. Ghazi on breaking the schackles of routine and launching out into "fresh fields and pastures new".

HAMID ALI KHAN

اپنے عمر بھر کے تجربے کے بعد غازی صاحب نے اپنی اس کتاب میں کتابوں اور مصنفوں اور لائبریریوں پر بڑے وثوق سے گفتگو کی ہے - اور کتابوں سے ان کے بہت گہرے تعلق کا خیال کر کے ان کے قاری پورے اعتماد سے ان کی اراء کو مستند سمجھیں گے -

سید امتیاز علی تاج

NOTE: For detailed VIEWS please refer to "SOME OPINIONS OF THIS BOOK" appearing on pages xiii to xviii